

App

NSC BRIEFING

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11 May 1955

INDONESIAN PROSPECTS

- I. Indonesia's first national elections, 5-1/2 years after country's foundation, have at last been set for 29 September.
 - A. Voters will elect a national parliament (260 seats in single house) to replace present 233-man body, which came into being largely by appointment.
 - B. Although no less than 40 different political groups will seek voters' support, main issue will be choice between coalition government (such as present one) which accepts Communist support or one opposing both domestic and international Communism.
 - C. Results expected to be close but we estimate that--if elections honest--parties now in opposition should win enough seats to allow formation new coalition government.

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II. September elections for parliament will be first of two scheduled for '55.

Second, in December, will elect 520 to special assembly which will draft permanent Indonesian constitution. Many candidates will seek seats in both bodies.

A. Both elections have been repeatedly delayed. - *may be again*

B. National Party (PNI), which has been in power past 19 months, is charged with ~~abetting~~ ^{these} such delays, to gain time for strengthening its political machine.

C. Opposition parties, obstructed by PNI tactics, suffering from traditional poverty of "outs," ^{may} have lost ground.

D. Communists, however, have made good use of delays to up membership, improve organization.

III. Of the more than 40 organizations registered, only four of primary significance.

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A. Masjumi (Moslem Council)--moderate Moslem organization, principal opposition party (present parliamentary strength: 17%).

1. As chief Moslem organization in predominantly Islamic nation, Masjumi looks to rural areas and lower classes for its vote and expects village religious leaders to deliver it.

2. Although earlier prediction had given Masjumi a chance for an absolute majority, it is now expected to win no more than 30-35 % of total vote (still plurality) and this only if elections are honest.

B. Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI: National Party)--the strongly nationalistic but opportunist party which leads present government (18%).

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1. PNI strength comes from civil service, students, businessmen, other educated groups.
2. PNI expected to pool no more than 15-20 % of vote if elections honest.

C. Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI: Communist Party)--under leadership of Aidit (who has done tours with Ho Chi Minh, ChiComs and Soviets) PKI hold 7% of present parliament, controls a bloc of 8% more, including largest labor federation in Indonesia (SOBSI), such peasant organizations as Barisan Tani Indonesia (BTI - Farmer's Union).

1. Other than Masjumi, PKI is only party with village organization.
2. PKI expected get 15-20% of honest vote.

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D. Partai Nahdlatul Ulama (NU: Renaissance of Learning)--a conservative anti-Communist Moslem party, which now holds such cabinet posts as Religion and Home Ministry.

1. Although supporting present government, NU is not committed for future, may line up with Masjumi after vote is in.

2. NU expected get 10%

E. Remaining 15-30% of vote will be scattered among minor contenders.

Spain
1. Most significant of these--since in opposition--are Socialist Party (PSI), Catholic Party (PKRI), and Christian Party (PARKINDO).

2. Collectively, these three may get 10-15%.

IV. Both sexes, over age 18 (or younger, if married) eligible to vote (estimated 50-60 million of total 79 million population).

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- A. Electorate inexperienced, 80% illiterate.
- B. Parties therefore putting pictographs, as well as names, on ballots: crescent and star for Masjumi; buffalo head in triangle for PNI; usual hammer and sickle for PKI; star-studded hemisphere for NU.
- C. PSI, although doing little electioneering, is compounding confusion by using seven different symbols.
- D. Masjumi ~~reported~~ busy in villages, teaching illiterates how to select crescent and star from among more than 40 competitors.
- V. Meanwhile, Government is trying obstruct, intimidate opposition--particularly Masjumi.
 - A. Masjumi candidates have been arrested on trumped-up charges of association with dissident Moslem extremists.

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B. Another Government tactic is refusal

- time on Government radio (only one)
to any of opposition parties, while
making air free to PNI, others in
coalition.

C. Government rigging of elections,
therefore, cannot be discounted.

Then There might be
revolution.

Gov't
can
declare
areas
"unsum"
+ appoint
representative
from these
areas

Hard to get hands on
leadership elements

Natsir - Hatta

(Marjumi)

Soekarno - Ali +

Commies

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